Subpart C - Responsibilities

404.20 Department of Agriculture

A. Responsibilities, as described in a June 3, 1988, memorandum of understanding between CSREES and NRCS (i.e., GM-460, Part 401, Water Quality Policy), are as follows:

1. CSREES agrees to provide assistance to NRCS in support of the development and use of site-specific information and to address water quality issues.
2. CSREES and NRCS agree to cooperate in encouraging each State's (or equivalent) Extension and NRCS organizational unit to develop guidelines and appropriate pesticide components for use in landowners/operators' conservation plans.
3. NRCS agrees (as outlined in a USDA companion document to the June 3, 1988, memorandum of understanding between CSREES and NRCS) to:
   i. "...provide site-specific resource data and planning assistance with regard to pesticide use and impacts of water quality to pesticide users and others making land use and management decisions."
   ii. "...assist landowners with the implementation of acceptable pesticide management practices."

B. Additionally, to meet the requirements of the Food Quality Protection Act of 1996, NRCS is committed to promoting IPM that provides both economic and environmental benefits.

404.21 NRCS National Headquarters Office

A. The Deputy Chief for Science and Technology, under the direction of the Chief, is responsible for providing national leadership for policy and procedures for NRCS pest management and identifying pest management research and technology development needs.
B. The Director of the Ecological Sciences Division (ESD) is responsible for developing, implementing, and evaluating NRCS pest management policy and procedures.
C. The National Pest Management Specialist of the ESD provides national leadership for pest management policy, environmental risk technologies, and training.
D. The National Water Quality and Quantity Team provide the technology development and technical assistance for pest management environmental risk analysis technologies, including WIN-PST and NAPRA.
E. The Director of the Soil Survey Division is responsible for maintaining the soil database to support interpretations for pesticide leaching, solution runoff, and adsorbed runoff loss potentials.

404.22 NRCS National Technology Support Centers (NTSC)

NTSC Directors will provide technical assistance to STCs/Directors of the Pacific Islands and Caribbean Areas for pest management assistance in their respective areas.

404.23 NRCS State Offices (or Equivalent)

STCs/Directors of the Pacific Islands and Caribbean Areas are responsible for:

1. Targeting pest management technical assistance to specific resource concerns and locations within their respective States/Areas (e.g., watersheds with pesticide-impaired sources of drinking water, pesticide Total Maximum Daily Load requirements, air quality non-attainment areas, or highly vulnerable areas that may contribute to future pest suppression-related contamination, increase risk of fire, and livestock production reduction).
2. Supplementing the pest management guidance and requirements in appropriate directives, as necessary, making it applicable to local conditions and providing a copy to the Director, ESD.
3. Ensuring that appropriate training is provided to all NRCS personnel who provide pest management technical assistance, and establishing a process to provide continuing education to maintain employee certification as outlined in GM-180, Part 409, Section 409.11.
4. Making certain that all NRCS personnel who provide pest management technical assistance to the public meet the applicable requirements for their positions and the State or local testing requirements as required by law.
5. Working in consultation with respective State Technical Committees to address State-specific pest management issues.
6. Utilize appropriate technology to evaluate pest management environmental risk (e.g., WIN-PST and/or NAPRA for risks to water quality). Environmental risk/hazard assessment tools other than WIN-PST or NAPRA must be reviewed by the National Pest Management Specialist, to ensure consistency with WIN-PST and NAPRA.
7. Providing assistance, training, and technical tools (with support of NTSC) to NRCS field service centers so that they are able to provide assistance to clients to recognize, inventory, assess, and suppress weeds in non-cropland.

404.24 NRCS Field Service Centers (or Equivalent)
A. NRCS field service center technical leaders (e.g., District Conservationists and Team Leaders) are responsible for providing local leadership in implementing the pest management policy.

B. NRCS field service center (or equivalent) employees are responsible for:

1. Evaluating environmental risk associated with the client’s pest suppression choices involving pesticides and soil disturbing activities as per GM-190, Part 404, Subpart D, 404.40, Pest Management Environmental Risk Analysis of this policy.
2. Providing technical assistance to clients to mitigate identified environmental risk of pest suppression strategies with conservation practices (NRCS FOTG practices) and/or Prevention, Avoidance or Monitoring activities recognized by the local land grant university or regional IPM center as being a viable IPM technique.
3. Assisting clients in adopting IPM techniques that protect natural resources in addition to those techniques used solely for the mitigation purposes above. When the client works with qualified individual(s) (e.g., University Extension, Certified Crop Advisor/Pesticide Control Advisor, etc.) to evaluate and select IPM techniques, the field office staff should document which IPM techniques were adopted and what resources benefited from their adoption.
4. Providing assistance to clients to recognize, inventory, assess, and suppress weeds in non-cropland. The field office staff will bring to the client’s attention any population of weeds in non-cropland that can prevent the successful establishment of a conservation practice or degrade the resource base so that the land cannot support its intended use. Additionally, field office staff may refer the client to qualified individuals (e.g., University Extension, Certified Crop Advisor/Pesticide Control Advisor, State or county weed and pest coordinator, etc.) for weed management recommendations or provide the client with pest suppression references consistent with GM-190, Part 404, Subpart B, Section 404.10 (c) (2) to address identified weed concerns. Field staff shall encourage procedures to work with their State and/or county weed management program.
5. Identifying pest management needs and informing STCs/Directors of the Pacific Islands and Caribbean Areas, or designee(s), of these needs, as appropriate.